

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0064

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, LU

SUBJ: LUXEMBOURG PRIME MINISTER MAY BE CANDIDATE FOR
UNGA PRESIDENCY

REF: COPENHAGEN 0149

1. AFTER RECEIVING SEVERAL REPORTS THAT PRIME MINISTER
(AND FOREIGN MINISTER) GASTON THORN MAY BE INTERESTED
IN RUNNING FOR THE UNGA PRESIDENCY THIS YEAR, I ASKED
THORN ON JANUARY 27 WHETHER THERE WAS ANY TRUTH TO
THESE RUMORS. THORN REPLIED THAT HE WAS SERIOUSLY
CONTEMPLATING SUCH A CANDIDACY AND HE INVITED ME TO
CONTACT HIM IN TWO WEEKS TIME WHEN HIS MIND WOULD BE
MADE UP. ECONOMICS MINISTER MART, WHO WAS PRESENT AT
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THE CONVERSATION AND IS SECOND-IN-COMMAND IN THORN'S

DEMOCRATIC PARTY, OPENLY OPPOSED THORN'S CANDIDACY FOR THE UNGA PRESIDENCY. BRITISH DCM HERE TELLS US THAT GOL HAS NOT YET BEGUN SOUNDINGS WITH LOCAL EC EMBASSIES ON EVENTUAL THORN CANDIDACY. BRITISH DCM ALSO NOTES THAT INFORMAL CORRIDOR DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE THORN CANDIDACY AT EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING IN DUBLIN, JANUARY 23-24, INDICATED WIDESPRED PREFERENCE FOR THORN CANDIDACY OVER THAT OF DANISH MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR OTTO BORCH (REFTEL). BRITISH SOURCE WILL NOTIFY US IF GOL DOES PROPOSE THORN CANDIDACY TO EC PARTNERS HERE.

2. COMMENT. FACTORS PUSHING THORN INTO ANNOUNCING HIS CANDIDACY ARE HIS CONSUMING AMBITION FOR ROLE ON WORLD SCENE AND HIS BELIEF THAT AS UNGA PRESIDENT HIS PRESIDENCY OF THE "EUROPEAN COUNCIL" DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY-JUNE 1976 WOULD BE ENHANCED. THORN'S SOCIALIST PARTNERS IN LUXEMBOURG'S DEMOCRATIC/SOCIALIST COALITION ARE ALSO FAVORABLE TOWARD THE CANDIDACY PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE THEY WILL HAVE GREATER SAY IN GOL DOMESTIC POLICIES WITH THORN ABSENT MOST OF THE TIME. ON THE OTHER HAND, LEADERS OF THORN'S OWN DEMOCRATIC PARTY OPPOSE THE CANDIDACY BECAUSE THEY WANT THORN TO BE AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGNER AND MANAGER OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS BEFORE THE COUNTRY-WIDE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS OF OCTOBER 1975. HEALTH FACTORS MAY ALSO DETER THORN BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD ME THAT HIS DOCTORS ARE CAUTIONING AGAINST AN INCREASE IN HIS WORK OR TRAVEL LOAD. SINCE THORN HAS STUBBORNLY RESISTED THE DELEGATION OF POWER EVEN WITHIN HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY, HE IS ALSO FACED WITH THE ABSENCE OF QUALIFIED STAFF TO FILL IN DURING HIS ABSENCES AND REPRESENT LUXEMBOURG AT HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL AT EC, BENELUX, WEU AND OTHER EUROPEAN REGIONAL MEETINGS. I WILL, OF COURSE, TAKE UP THE PRIME MINISTER'S INVITATION TO CONTACT HIM IN TWO WEEKS TO ASK FOR HIS LATEST INTENTIONS REGARDING THE UNGA PRESIDENCY.FARKAS

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